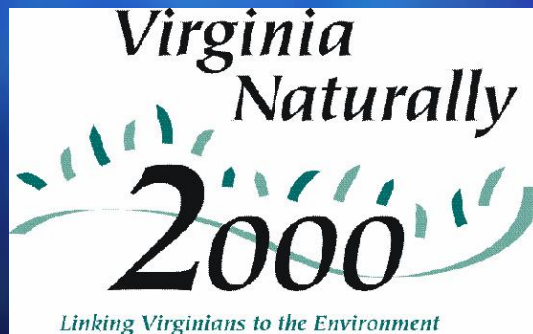


The background is an abstract, textured image with shades of blue, purple, and teal. A thin, dark horizontal line is positioned in the upper left quadrant. The text is centered and rendered in a white, serif font with a subtle drop shadow.

Better Site Design & The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act

Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department

- ❖ *The Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department exists to protect the public interest in the Chesapeake Bay and other State waters from pollution impacts associated with the use and development of land. This will be accomplished in a manner that balances the objectives of water quality protection and economic development, promoting sound land use planning and management measures.*



Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas

- ❖ Resource Protection
Areas
- ❖ Resource Management
Areas

Performance Criteria

- ❖ Eight of these criteria are very specific:
 - ❖ Plan of development review requirements
 - ❖ 2,500 SF ESC threshold
 - ❖ 5-year septic pumpout & reserve drainfield
 - ❖ Stormwater management criteria
 - ❖ BMP maintenance agreements
 - ❖ Agricultural BMPs
 - ❖ Silvicultural BMPs
 - ❖ Proof of Wetlands Permits

Performance Criteria

- ❖ Three of the criteria are more subjective, making them more difficult to implement and evaluate.

Performance Criteria

No more land shall be disturbed than is necessary to provide for the desired use or development.

Performance Criteria

Indigenous vegetation shall be preserved to the maximum extent possible consistent with the use and development allowed.

Performance Criteria

Land development shall minimize impervious cover consistent with the use or development allowed.

What's Clear . . .

- ❖ In each case, the word “shall” is used in the Regulations, making it clear that they are mandatory, not voluntary.
- ❖ Using these criteria can result in significant benefits to the environment, the developer, the property owner, and the community.

What's Not Clear . . .

- ❖ What benchmarks should be used?
 - ❖ When is land disturbance minimized?
 - ❖ How much vegetation must be preserved?
 - ❖ When is impervious cover minimized?

More Questions . . .

- ❖ Which aspects of development should be evaluated?
 - ❖ Roads?
 - ❖ Parking?
 - ❖ Building envelope?
 - ❖ Landscaping?
 - ❖ Grading?

More Questions . . .

- ❖ Should standards be developed for each type of development?
 - ❖ Residential (various densities)
 - ❖ Retail
 - ❖ Office
 - ❖ Industrial
 - ❖ Re-development

More Questions . . .

- ❖ Which requirements should be specifically incorporated into ordinances and which should remain more flexible?

Who Provides the Answers?

- ❖ Incorporating these concepts into the local development review process has, for the most part, been left to the discretion of local governments.

The Survey Says . . .

- ❖ In both of the Department's local government needs surveys, information on site design and evaluating site plans have ranked as the highest priorities among local program administrators.

Early Conclusions . . .

- ❖ We're not ready to develop a "how-to" manual or handbook.
- ❖ Properly addressing this issue will take time, feedback from those affected, and probably several iterations of guidance.
- ❖ Lots of work has already been done on this subject – we need to look at this first.

Center for Watershed Protection . . .

- ❖ Staffed a national site planning roundtable.
- ❖ Publication; “Better Site Design – A Handbook for Changing Development Rules in Your Community”

Better Site Design in Virginia

- ❖ "Better Site Design: An Assessment of the Better Site Design Principles for Communities Implementing Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act"

&

- ❖ "Better Site Design: An Informational Brochure for Virginia Communities Implementing the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act"

16 Principles & 4 Case Studies

- ❖ The document describes the 16 principles taken from the Center's publication that apply to the three General Performance Criteria.
- ❖ It also provides four case studies of developments where these principles were applied in Virginia.
- ❖ Brochure: Summarizes concept; suitable for distribution.

General Benefits

- ❖ To water quality/habitat . . .
 - ❖ Decreased runoff & associated pollutants; nutrients, sediment, and toxins
- ❖ To the developer . . .
 - ❖ Reduced costs; less pavement/utilities, fewer BMPs
 - ❖ Marketability
- ❖ To community/property owners . . .
 - ❖ More attractive/efficient design
 - ❖ Property value

Applying the Principles . . .

- ❖ Not all 16 principles will apply in all cases, as evidenced by the case studies.
- ❖ The goal should be to apply those that you can, where you can to meet the three general performance criteria.
- ❖ This means keeping the principles in mind during the site planning and review process.

Where do we go from here?

- ❖ Present our work to Bay Act stakeholders . . .
 - ❖ Local government staff
 - ❖ Developers & design professionals
 - ❖ Local policymakers
- ❖ Get feedback . . .
 - ❖ What are the impediments?
 - ❖ Which principles look most promising?
 - ❖ 1-800-CHES-BAY, www.cblad.state.va.us
- ❖ Refine the Principles . . .